Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
August 13, 2025

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Land Use Committee ("Committee") of the Representative Policy Board ("RPB"), of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District ("RWA"), took place on Wednesday, August 13, 2025, at Route 42, Bethany, Connecticut. Chair Levine presided.

Committee Members Present: M. Levine, P. DeSantis, B. Eitzer, G. Malloy, J. Oslander, and J. Mowat Young

Committee Members Absent: P. Betkoski

RPB: R. Harvey, T. Clifford, C. Havrda, and T. Slocum

FMA: D. Borowy

Management: V. Benni, C. Cordes, and J. Triana

CT Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES): Dr. J. Ward

Staff: J. Slubowski

Due to the impending weather, Chair Levine called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

Chair Levine offered the opportunity for members of the public to comment. There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy, and seconded by Mr. Eitzer, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of its July 9, 2025 regular meeting, as corrected.

Dr. Jeffrey Ward of the CAES, provided and update on the Precommercial Crop Tree Release of White Oak Saplings Preliminary Results, which is a practice used to enhance growth and survival of white oak saplings by removing competing trees to provide more space, sunlight, and moisture for crop trees. The updated included:

- Background and location
- Objective, classes, and treatments
- Observations, studies, and data analysis

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Triana reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
July 31	85%	90%	81%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
July 2025	2.25	5.24	3.74
Fiscal YTD (6/1/24 –	3.32	9.18	7.42

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Cheshire, former Bis property (CH 5) – Supplied updated survey to DEEP for the OSWA grant and it was approved. Started title work as required for the grant.
- Seymour, 56 Squantuck Rd. (SE 5) – Following up with the town regarding P&SA.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – LUC determined that the application was complete. RPB scheduled the public hearing for September. Notices of the public hearing sent to all required parties.
- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – Contacted potential buyer since there were signs posted at the property. They were still waiting to get estimates for work on the house.

Forestry Update

- Met with Audubon staff to learn how to assess a maple stand as "bird friendly." This certification can only be performed by an Audubon endorsed forester and will allow maple producers utilizing RWA property to claim their syrup product is bird friendly.
- Discussed a potential grant opportunity though the USDA pertaining to improving forest stands for timber production.
- Continued to work on the second field season of the Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) grant and have RWA submit for reimbursement from the USFS.

Recreation

- Bass tournament was held at Lake Saltonstall with 32 participants.
- Botany walk was held at Pine Hill with 25 participants.
- The New Haven PALS camp came twice to the Maltby lakes with kids to fish with the help of our police. Sixty-one kids participated.
- Discussed proposal of a trail at the former Beech St. property with the North Branford Land Conservation Trust.
- The Water Wagon was brought to six events.

	July		June	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Permit Holders	4,861	4,929	4,916	4,989

Special Activity Permits

- URI (Ari Locklear and designees) – Release biological agent, moth Hypena opulenta to help control the population of invasive plants black and pale swallowwort, Lake Gaillard, Lake Saltonstall (7//17/2025) noontime.
- CT Forest & Park Assoc. (CFPA) (Julia Sonen) conduct tour of property, Master Woodland Manager Program, forestry ecology, Seymour Site, Seymour (6/13/26). Note this is for next year.

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
  - Madison, 702 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Continued communicating with abutter who was trying to get his surveyor involved.

  - Agricultural agreements – Met with potential tenant in Prospect. Executed agreement with tenant for the fields in Branford.
  - North Branford, 1790 Middletown Ave. (NB 16) – Abutter called and said they would enter into a license agreement. In process to be signed.
  - Branford, Cherry Hill Rd. (BR 10A) – Certified letter was returned unopened. Murtha to advise on next step.
  - East Haven, Barberry Rd. fields (EH 9, 10, 11, & 13) – Review of the LOA in progress.
  - West Haven, Shingle Hill tanks (WH 7) – Received updated draft of the agreement with the City from Murtha. Forwarded to the City for their review.

- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in Branford, East Haven, Bethany, and North Branford. Inspected for water chestnut in Lake Saltonstall. Collected all plants found, and documented locations. Monitored water chestnut harvest and facilities crew helping dispose of the chestnut. All accessible chestnut was harvested in 10.5 days, including the rear bay. Performed a drone mission at Furnace Pond to document the condition of the water chestnut before the harvest. Began preparation for herbicide treatment trials on the Saltonstall ridge.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	14 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	3 acres

- Woodbridge, Racebrook Rd. access (WO 10) – Sent draft of the access agreement to the property owners to review.
- Deer hunt – Two proficiency tests were held with all hunters passing. The head count after the tests stands at North Branford – 129; Bethany – 23; Prospect – 20; & Seymour – 8.
- North Branford, UI watermain easement – North Branford approved the easement. Asked Murtha to send them the documents they needed to complete. Tried to correspond with UI staff about the easement over their property.
- Land Use Plan – Received final comments.
- Cell phone antennas – Corresponded with Crown Castle staff about the lease extension.
- Easements – Researched UI easement near Lake Whitney dam for Engineering. In this case, it existed by prescription due to the moving of the road over time. Researched easement for our watermain behind Walmart in the Hamden Mart off of Dixwell Ave. UI wants to move their lines to the back and is asking us to subordinate our easement.
- Drone missions - Performed a drone mission for Engineering to document condition of watermain underneath the Kimberly Ave. bridge, over the West River.

There were no other land items to report.

The next meeting is on Wednesday, September 10, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.

At 5:50 p.m., Ms. Young entered the meeting, and on motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Mr. Oslander, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

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Mark Levine, Chair